

March 18th, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: WJG 7644 Final.doc).

Title: Microbiota-Host Interactions in Irritable Bowel Syndrome: Epithelial barrier, immune regulation and brain-gut interactions.

Author: Niall Hyland, Eamonn Quigley, Elizabeth Brint

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 7644

Please find below rebuttal comments to the reviewers suggestions. Reviewer comments are in bold and author rebuttals in red

1. The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of the editor:

- The Title has been shortened

2. Revision has been made according to the suggestions of reviewer 1 (00504182).

3.

“The article is well written and organised: I just suggest to the Authors to make more simple the text focusing a little bit more on the topic as suggested in the title, avoiding what could be out of the scope of the review (i.e. metagenome, metabolome, proteome, and also in the conclusion avoid the first two paragraphs in the conclusion.”.

We thank the reviewer for their comment that the article is well written. We have shortened the length of the overall article and removed extraneous detail.

- The whole introduction has been re-written to refocus the article and
- The section on “i.e. metagenome, metabolome, proteome” has been deleted.
- The conclusion has been reworked and is, we feel, significantly improved.

4. Revision has been made according to the suggestions of reviewer 2 (00541318).

“This is a narrative review of the literature on irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and the implications of microbiota-host interactions. It is a well-written paper and the authors have exhausted the existing published literature.

- We thank the reviewer for stating that it is a well written paper

“However, the manuscript is too wordy with a lot of redundant information. The authors should provide a shorter version of their manuscript focusing only in the subject of their review”.

- We have shortened the manuscript by 1,300 words

“To give a few examples: (1) explaining the definitions of "metagenome" and "microbiome"

(page 1-2)”

- This has been deleted

“and (2) describing the findings of the historical article by Nissle on the epithelial barrier function (page 3) are out of the scope of this review”

- Much of the detail in this section has been deleted

“Having a whole page of conclusive remarks highlights by itself the too detailed way the authors decide to write this review”

- The conclusion has been reworked, shortened and is, we feel, significantly improved.

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth Brint